



Superior Court
Of the State of California for the
County of Yolo
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James B. Perry
Court Executive Officer

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The recent incident involving an in-custody murder defendant who was fatally shot after he left the witness stand and attacked sitting Judge Cinda Fox, was a reminder to local court leaders of the dire need for a new courthouse. The current historic courthouse in Yolo County was built in 1917 and housed all county functions to include the Board of Supervisors, District Attorney, Public Defender and the Court. Today, with over 45,000 annual filings, seven court locations, and a substantial criminal caseload the court has long outgrown the antiquated facility. Presiding Judge David Rosenberg opined that "the Stockton incident is a reminder of the need for a state-of-the-art courthouse with modern design and safety features. Like Stockton, inmates in Yolo Superior Court are "chain-gained" and walked through crowded public hallways. "'Everyone move to one side' can often be heard as court security personnel try to maneuver in-custody inmates dressed in stripped uniforms through busy corridors" said Rosenberg. Jim Perry, Court Executive Officer, stated that "the Sheriff's Department does a fantastic job given limited resources and the safety challenges in the current building." However, Perry acknowledged that there is only so much they can do with such an out-dated design. In light of the Stockton attack, Perry met with the Sheriff's Office to discuss the incident and review security policy procedures to make sure that everything possible is being done to ensure that not only judicial officers and court staff are safe but also the 375,000 members of the public who visit the courthouse yearly.

"This latest attack on Judge Fox is another reminder of how important it is that a new Woodland courthouse be built as quickly as possible" said Rosenberg. Rosenberg, Perry and Executive staff have been working intently with the Administrative Office of the Courts on a new 190,000 square foot court facility that will accommodate Yolo County's 298,000 plus population and crushing case loads. Perry stated that "the new design will include a special elevator for movement of inmates so that they will not have to be escorted through public hallways, courtrooms with clear separation from the bench and witness stand, and other technological design features meant to ensure public and judicial safety are a top priority. SB1407, passed in 2008, is the mechanism which allows for collection of fees from courthouse users and will raise enough money to fund 41 similar capital court projects statewide. The Yolo Superior Court project is one of four projects moving forward later this year. It is anticipated that funding will be available for the project starting in July, 2009.